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Editorial

IN THE WORKSHOP

"The best method of teaching Latin is to learn more Latin," said a prominent speaker at the last meeting of the Classical Association at St. Louis. This, like most attempts at generalizing in truth, is but a half-truth. It certainly does go without saying that one cannot teach what he does not know. "If the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch." And most of us can remember the agony of sitting under teachers whose limitations were apparent even to us. It ought to go equally without saying that the more one knows of his subject, the better he can teach it. But here, paradoxical as it may seem, the facts do not always correspond with the theory. In the first place, some men of undoubted scholarship are so far advanced in their field that they have no practical interest in the more elementary processes through which they have long since passed, and find it a bore to lead callow learners along that path. Others, being far removed from their own days of small beginnings, cannot appreciate the state and ability of mind of the young student, and hence do not know in what proportion and in what manner the mental pabulum should be offered to him. Matter is thus oftentimes presented too technically, too fast, and in illogical order, and the result is a hopelessly discouraged class lost to the subject—and all notwithstanding the teacher's great learning. He *knew*, but he did not *know how*.

With all our learning, then, we shall not succeed in teaching unless we have the spirit to teach, a keen personal interest in the work in hand, and still more interest in the *boys and girls* in hand. For, after all, if we have not a zest for *humanity*, the *humanities*

and all other subjects will be but as dead things in our hands. We want more inspirational teaching, which can be done only by an inspired teacher; and this inspiration comes quite as much from a live personality, a keen human interest, as from a mind well stored with learning. We all know such teachers, and look back to our days with them as to the epoch-making days of our mental and spiritual growth.

But this is not enough in itself, though it is sure to work out for itself in the end the lacking element. One may desire and love to teach; he must also know how to teach. There is always one best way of doing things, and it often requires careful thought and training to find this out. And, furthermore, it is not enough that the teacher shall know this best way of teaching; *but the student must himself find out the best way of learning*. It is very much to be feared that we teach too much Latin, and altogether too little how the student may for himself *learn* Latin—learn it in such a way that after a few years it shall be his possession and his to gain without help or need of any teacher.